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291 PRUDERY.—The sentiment of prudery is natural with these people. Few of them will submit to medical examination and on that account there are few Indians working at the gold mines of Pispis, where every applicant for work is obliged to pass such an examination.

294 DRESSMAKING.—All the various garments were made formerly from tree bark or cotton. Raveneau de Lussan (439) states, however, that the Miskito made also clothing and blankets from a grayish [824] stuff which they obtained from the bastard palm (cabbage palm?). The clothes (M.: *kwala;* S.: *asna*) from imported cotton goods are [439] generally made by the men. Hand sewing machines may be met with in many huts. Needles (M.: *silak;* T., P.: *silip;* U.: *akusa*, from the Spanish "aguja") are bought in the local shops. The washing 296 of the clothes is, however, the work of the women, who beat them at the river banks with wooden clubs (*tamtam*); the leaves and the fruits [824] of a small tree (*Sapindus saponaria* L.; M. & S.: *sniwawa*) are used as soap.

BODILY ORNAMENTATION AND DECORATION

302 BODY PAINTING.—Black and red paint is still applied as an ornament, but more frequently the object is to protect the skin from the sting of certain insects, from the rays of the tropical sun, and even the cold. Perhaps originally this was also done in order to scare the enemy at a battle, for the body was painted in a very hideous manner when an armed expedition was being organized. The paint replaces to some extent the Indian's clothing. The black color is made use of by the men and the red by the women, just as was already the custom among the Miskito during the latter half of the seventeenth century (Exquemelin, Engl. ed.: 252).

386 The reddish pigment, which may vary from yellow to brown, is obtained from the seeds of a shrub or small tree, called annatto 824 (arnotto) and faroah in the British colonies of tropical America, and "achote" or "achiote" by the Spaniards; the Dutch in Surinam call it "orlean," while the French have given it the name "rocou," from *ruku* or *uruku*, used by certain Indian tribes of Brazil and the Guianas. Its botanical name is *Bixa orellana* L.; the word *Bixa* is derived from the ancient language of Haiti.

The seeds are gathered as soon as the capsules split open, and put in boiling water to remove the testa, or waxy substance, surrounding them. This red waxy coloring matter is then passed through a sieve and made to coagulate with the aid of the leaves of the *tiswat* tree or the seeds from the "ojo de buey" (*Mucuna* sp.; M.: *kwakus;* S.: *wabala*). It is kept in small calabashes or bottles, which may be seen depending from the rafters of the Indian hut. Before use the 302 pigment is tempered with native vegetable oils. It is applied by

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the women with the aid of small wooden sticks (M.: *aulala-dusa;* S.: *awal-panan*) across nose, cheeks, chin, and forehead, in lines, dots, and dashes; sometimes geometrical designs are made. This manner of applying the pigment is by no means hideous; the legs are occasionally painted to match the color of the dress.

The black paint is used by the men. The Sumu obtain it chiefly from the melted gum of certain trees, as rubber (*Castilla* sp.), cortés, or *auka* (*Tecoma* sp.), or "tunu," whereas the Miskito use pinewood soot (M.: *slami;* S.: *dam*). Over the latter the Miskito apply a "varnish" of turpentine (M.: *auas-maka;* S.: *auas-ya*), which habit was practiced already toward the end of the seventeenth century (M. W.: 308). The men generally smear the whole of the exposed body parts and never make use of the pretty designs obtained by the women with annatto dye.[25]

Sometimes clays are also used as pigments. In former days it was the work of the woman to paint and anoint her husband every morning previous to his departure for the chase. Now everyone does his own painting and decorating; small looking-glasses for that purpose are in every household. The latter are known by their English name among the Miskito, whereas the Sumu call them *waya-tal* "to see the likeness."

TATTOO.—The embellishment of the countenance with tattoo (M.: *rami;* S.: *tik-pana, rami*) is still common among both tribes. The incisions into the flesh were formerly made with the thorns of certain bromeliaceous plants, flint splinters, agouti claws, or fish teeth; pinewood soot was then rubbed into the wound. Nowadays the flesh is punctured with steel needles and gunpowder is applied in the incisions. The stains are as enduring as a human life. Face, arms, and breast are the body parts which are most frequently tattooed. The designs generally represent geometrical figures and resemble those engraved on calabashes and on river bowlders. At the time of Columbus (1502) a certain tribe living on the coast of Honduras, to the west of Cabo Gracias a Dios, had on arms and bodies "figures wrought with fire," representing jaguars, pumas, and castles. Pim and Seemann also state that tattooing by cautery was practiced by the Sumu of Rio Escondido.

NECKLACES.—Necklaces (M.: *nana-wilkaya;* T., P.: *ditmak-sitnin;* U.: *dakat-sitnaka*) of shell beads, quartz, greenstone, fish, and turtle bones, small vertebræ, snails, animal teeth, and seeds from certain plants were formerly in use. It is unknown, however, how these articles were formerly pierced without the aid of European imple-

[25] According to Bell (b: 186) the male Sumu from the upper Rio Prinsapoles painted their faces black and red in stripes and diamonds.

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ments. The Sumu also carried the nails and teeth extracted from their unhappy victims (M. W.: 305). The seeds of the "lágrima de San Pedro" (*Coix lacryma-jobi* L.; M.: *twi ma;* S.: *am minik, am mak*) are still in great favor.

In modern times such necklaces are nearly always made from small colored glass beads (M.: *lilywa;* T., P.: *ala;* U.: *tasaŭka*) of foreign manufacture. Bead ornaments are also worn by both sexes around the wrist, at the ankle, and below the knee. On festive occasions the men also put "hatbands" of beadwork around their hats. The Sumu women seldom wear the beads worked in a pretty design, as do the men, but they put the whole "hank" around the neck, just as they buy them in the shops, fastening the ends at the back of the neck. Sometimes they wear such a large quantity of these beads as to hinder them considerably in following their daily occupation.

FEATHERWORK.—Feathers from certain bright-colored birds, as parrots, toucans, macaws, curassows, etc., are made into ornaments by attaching them to a string or to a thin vine with the aid of thread from cotton or silk grass fiber. Such ornaments are comparatively rare now; they are seen chiefly at the festival of the dead. The art of the "tapirage" (from a native name of the Guianas), or artificial means of obtaining yellow or red plumes from parrots or other birds, as is still done in South America, appears to have been known to the Sumu in former days. For this purpose they used the secretion from the skin of a common greenish-blue frog (*Dendrobates tinctorius*) with black stripes and spots over the whole body, including the legs, which was rubbed into the skin of the parrot, the subsequently appearing young feathers being yellowish red instead of green.

PECTORAL PLATES.—M. W. (308) mentions a thin breastplate worn by the Miskito on festal occasions; it was made of a Spanish dollar piece beaten out flat. Columbus also mentions such gold ornaments which were worn around 1502 on the Atlantic coast of Costa Rica and Panama.

NOSE AND LIP ORNAMENTS.—The nasal septum was formerly perforated for the reception of a rod of bone or cane, an ornament which has now entirely disappeared. Dampier (I, 32) describes and depicts a curious cone or bell shaped ornament of turtle shell worn by the Kukra males of Corn Islands in the underlip. During early childhood the lip of the boy was pierced and the perforation kept open by means of little pegs. When arrived at the age of 14 or 15 (probably at the age of puberty) the boy inserted in the opening an ornament of tortoise shell, the under part of which was allowed to hang down over the chin; it was worn the whole day long, but it was taken out at night. About the latter part of the seventeenth century the Miskito wore on the chin a pendent plate of brass or shell, which was supported by a turtle-shell hook inserted in the lower lip (M. W.: 308).

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EAR ORNAMENTS.—Formerly the ear lobes of both sexes were pierced for the reception of ear plugs (see under Deformation of body) and pendants were worn at festivals. Nowadays silver crescentic earrings (M.: *kyama-lula, kyama-dusa, kul-dusa, baprih;* S.: *tapana*) and finger rings (M.: *mat-diñka, mihta-diñka;* S.: *tinana*) are very common. These articles are either bought from foreign traders or from traveling Ladino goldsmiths.

HAIR.—The men cut their hair short, but occasionally the elder Miskito leave a lock of hair just back of the crown. About the middle of the nineteenth century the Sumu men wore their hair long and tied it in a queue (Bell, b: 158; Collinson, b: 149–150), but now they have it cut fairly short in a straight line just above the eyebrows and as far back as the temples. The women of both tribes cut their hair off just above the eyelashes in order to prevent it from hanging over the face, but on the sides and back it is allowed to hang down freely. Upon the death of a relative they cut it off short and lay it in the grave with the deceased, a practice which formerly was also current among the men at the death of their wives.

At the settlement of Cariay, which probably existed in Costa Rica and not on the Mosquito Coast, as many believe, the women wore their hair cut short in 1502. The men, on the other hand, had it long; the fringe was cut moderately short, while the remainder of the hair was allowed to grow long and was bound up with fillets round the head in braids and rolls.

Both sexes devote much attention to their hair and they apoint it frequently in order to render it softer and easier to handle. Their favorite hair oil, known by the Miskito name *batana*, is obtained from the seeds of the oil palm (*Elaeis melanococca*). The Sumu also extract the oil from the seeds of various other trees, as the saba (*Guarea caoba* or *Carapa guianensis*), the "eboe" (*Coumarouna oleifera*), the "yari" and the small huiscoyol palm (*Bactris horrida* Oerst.); they also buy *batana* from their neighbors. Nowadays these hair oils are mixed with foreign hair tonics, perfumes, and vaselines, but in former days the Indians added the aromatic rootstock or fruits of certain indigenous plants. Flowers and ribbons are also tied or stuck in the hair by the females.

A crude native comb was formerly made by tying together a number of small sticks which tapered to a point at each end. Now only foreign-made combs are seen. Among the Miskito the latter are known by the English word *kum*, whereas the Sumu have native names (T.: *bas-kus;* P., U.: *bas-kahna*). Exquemelin (Fr. ed.: II, 268–269) states that the Miskito wife used to comb her husband's hair every morning before the latter went out hunting and fishing.

DEPILATION.—Although the Indians take much pride in an abundant growth of hair on the head, they would formerly not allow any

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HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS

352 BEDS AND TABLES.—The primitive Indian bed, which has practically disappeared, consisted merely of a layer of tree bark, Heliconia leaves, or deer skin, spread on the ground; it is known among the Miskito by the name *puhlak taya* "balsa tree bark," while the Sumu call it *takal* (T., P.) and *lim* (U.).

Nowadays stages of split bamboo serve indiscriminately as beds and tables. These structures (M.: *krikri;* S.: *kirikiri*) are raised about 3 feet from the ground and are supported by four strong posts. Instead of sheets of bamboo the whole may be covered with wild cane sticks. Sheets of pounded tree bark serve as blankets
513 and as bed sheets (M.: *nina-pala, munta-pala;* T., P.: *dañ-rina;* U.: *dañ-paknak*); in Honduras the Miskito also use mats (*tnasi*) made from a rush growing around the swamps and lagoons. Pillows (M.: *tilar*, corrupted from the English; S.: *tunana*) are stuffed with cotton
● [824] or the fiber surrounding the seeds of the silk cotton and of the balsa trees. The Miskito living at the mouth of Rio Patuca slice the upper part of the stem of the small "palmetto" palm, which grows in the neighborhood, and use the thin flakes to stuff pillows and mattresses.
[439] The mosquito nets, called *pabulo* by both tribes, are made of opaque cotton sheeting of foreign manufacture, so that each bed forms practically a separate compartment.

HAMMOCKS.—While at home, hammocks (M.: *silmika;* S.: *wah*) are seldom used during the night, and then only by unmarried boys and girls. They are, however, carried along on long journeys. During the day the men dream away much time in the hammocks, but the women use them rarely. They may be made of cotton, tree bark, or Bromelia fibers.

CRADLES.—In former days cradles (M.: *kuhsañ;* T., P.: *pala;* U.:
854 *lim*) were used by the Sumu in connection with the habit of flattening the heads of babies. (See under Deformation of body.) Since this practice has gone out of use cradles have disappeared entirely and small hammocks are now used for the children. The dried claws of crabs and other objects were tied to the cradle, making a strange rattling noise at each movement.

352 STOOLS.—Low wooden stools (M.: *sulati;* T., P.: *tini;* U.: *panba*) with three or four legs and a flat or concave surface, hewn from solid blocks of wood, are used by the women, unless they sit directly on the ground. They may be square or oblong and suggest the stone metates found in the ancient sites. They range in size from diminutive forms used as toys by the children to benches of over 3 feet in length. When a stranger arrives at the Indian hut one of these seats or a hammock will immediately be offered to him.

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DISHES.—Calabashes (M.: *kahmi;* S.: *sutak*) take the place of plates, cups and glasses in the Indian houses; they are made from the fruit of the calabash tree, which is cut in two equal halves, and the soft watery pulp with the seeds removed. The thin, hard, woody shell is not fragile and lasts a long time. 415

By piercing such a calabash with small holes a strainer or collander (M.: *lili;* T., P.: *lilihna;* U.: *dilana*) is obtained; this is the "chachi" of the Creoles.

Large cups without handles, and basins are bought in the local shops; they are known by the name *mak*.

Square, round, or oval-shaped wooden bowls are made by the Indians of mahogany or other woods; they are known by their English names. These bowls are thick and clumsy and shaped like shallow basins; occasionally they are provided with very short, stout legs.

VARIOUS KITCHEN UTENSILS.—Flat withe baskets (M.: *usnuh, uslun;* S.: *uslun, wah-tuina, sidan*), hanging under the roof in the smoke of the fire contain large wooden spoons (M.: *kustara*, from the Spanish "cuchara"; S.: *pan-yamna*), called "pat sticks" by the Creoles, small single-headed wooden pestles or wabul sticks (M.: *tuskaya;* T., P.: *pan-tirina;* U.: *pan-ruknaka*), cacao stirring sticks or "swizzle sticks" (M.: *purbaya;* S.: *pan-korona, pan-poronaka*). These various utensils are made from Spanish cedar, mahogany, sapodilla, or rosewood.

Iron graters are seen occasionally. The Sumu have a native name (*pan-alna*) for this implement, while the Miskito call it by its English name.

The rough leaves of a small tree (*Curatella americana* L.) and of a vine (*Davilla kunthii* St. Hil.) are employed instead of sandpaper for polishing purposes. Both these plants belong to the Dilleniaceae and are called "raspa-guacal," "hoja-chigüe" or "chumico" by the Ladinos; among the Miskito, Sumu, and Creoles they are known by the name *yahal*. 824 356

TOOLS

Before the discovery of America these Indians had few utensils and implements of stone; such articles were chiefly of wood, clay, shell, bone, etc. It would be nearer the truth to say that the Miskito and Sumu were living in the wood age instead of the stone age. Stone objects are, of course, the ones which have been preserved mostly. Fish teeth, snail and tortoise shells, quarts, flint, pebbles, and the like were used as scraping implements. Knives of bamboo are still used to sever the navel string of newborn babies. 412

MACHETE.—The machete (M., T., P.: *ispara*, from the Spanish "espada"; U.: *masat*), a heavy cutlasslike knife of about 2 feet in length, is the vade mecum of these Indians. It is their faithful

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that in former days the Miskito made rude canoes of plaited withes and made them waterproof by smearing a thin layer of clay over them. The Ladinos have corrupted the name into "pipante." The Miskito of the upper Rio Coco, who know no other boat but the pitpan, apply the name *deri* or *duri* nowadays to a keeled or unkeeled canoe, but among their kindred living near the sea this word is restricted to the former type. In all Sumu dialects both types are called *kwiñ*.

BATEAU.—A large form of pitpan, known by the French name "bateau," is generally used to transport cargo on the rivers of the Mosquito Coast. It is made by enlarging an ordinary pitpan. The latter is cut lengthwise in two halves of equal size; boards are then inserted, and the two parts are joined again. The sides are also raised. Such bateaux are generally manned by six paddlers and take about 5,000 pounds of freight. On some of the larger rivers there are operating some bateaux measuring up to 60 feet in length, 4 to 6 feet in width, and taking up to 100 Spanish quintals (say, 4,600 kg., or 10,145 English pounds) of merchandise. These are manned by from 10 to 12 Indians. A small cabin or "carrosa" for the passengers is made immediately in front of the captain's seat, who steers the boat from the stern with the aid of a gigantic paddle. Such a cabin may be made of canvas cloth or merely of bamboo and large leaves; it affords protection from rain and sunshine.

MAKING OF A DUGOUT.—The manner of cutting trees and hollowing them out in former days was evidently that practiced in other parts of the New World before the arrival of the Spaniards. A ring was made with the stone ax through the bark and base of the tree, thus causing it to dry. Then fire was applied, and the wood was cut away as it charred. This process was repeated until finally the tree was felled. The hollowing out of the stem was also effected by alternately applying fire and the stone ax. Water was always kept at hand in order to quench the fire so as not to waste more wood than was necessary.

The width of a dugout is enlarged after it has been filled with water during a number of days; it may then easily be stretched and widened by inserting sticks. In former days rough dugout canoes used to be furnished by some of the Sumu tribes as a sort of tribute to the King of the Miskito.

TREES USED IN CANOE MAKING.—Following is a list of the various trees which are made into canoes by the Indians under consideration:

Mahogany (M. and S.: *yulu*; *Swietenia macrophylla* King) is the tree most commonly used, as it is very abundant on the Mosquito Coast; canoes from this wood are very durable, but rather heavy, and they are often attacked by boring worms.

Cedar (M.: *yulum, wiñkur*; S.: *sukun, wiñkur*; *Cedrela* sp.). Canoes hollowed out from this tree are very light and comparatively du-

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rable; the wood splits easily, but it has the advantage of not being subject to the attack of worms.

The guanacaste tree (M. and S.: *tuburus; Enterolobium cyclocarpum* Griseb.) is the one preferred by the Black Carib for the making of canoes; they allow the tree to "season" on the ground for a few months before starting to hollow it out. The wood is as light as cedar.

From the silk cotton tree (M.: *sisin;* S.: *panya, paniki; Ceiba pentandra* Gaertn.) very large dugouts may be made, but its light, whitish wood is not durable. Owing to certain superstitions regarding this tree, it is rarely used in boat making. (See Religion, etc.)

Saba (M.: *swa;* S.: *saba; Carapa guianensis* Aubl. or *Guarea caoba* C. DC.). The wood from this tree can scarcely be distinguished from mahogany in color and general appearance, but it is less durable.

Santa Maria (M. and S.: *krasa; Calophyllum brasiliense* var.) is seldom used, and it is suitable only for small canoes, as the tree does not attain such a great size as the aforementioned varieties. The wood is very durable, but it is rather heavy.

Emery (*Vochysia hondurensis* Sprague) is occasionally made into dugouts in the southern section of the Mosquito Coast. The wood resembles that of the silk cotton, but it is more lasting. It has, however, the disadvantage of soon becoming water-logged; besides, it rots immediately where a nail has been driven in.

The banak or cebo tree (M. and S.: *banak; Virola merendonis* ?) is a large tree which is also occasionally made into canoes.

CANOE POLES.—Canoes are propelled by long poles or by paddles. The poles (M.: *kahra, kahara;* T.: *kaha pan;* P.: *kaha pana, kuriß pasa;* U.: *pan saß*) are used in shallow water with rapid current and hard bottom. In a small "cranky" pitpan this method of travel is not agreeable, especially to a newcomer; each time the boatman, who stands up at the bow, push with their poles, the canoe begins to lurch as if it was going to upset. The captain sits at the stern and steers with a paddle.

PADDLES.—The paddles (M.: *kwahi;* T. and P.: *kawaß;* U.: *wdihna*) are broad bladed and made generally of mahogany or cedar. They measure from 4 to 5 feet in length and are often roughly polished. Larger paddles are also used, especially by the steersman, for the propelling of the bateaux. At its upper extremity the paddle terminates into an enlargement or "ear" (M.: *kyama;* S.: *tapani, tapaka*), which serves as grip to one hand, while the other hand grasps the paddle about 2 feet farther down. The paddles are moved vertically along the gunwale of the boat, the blade forcing back the water with main strength applied and very quick strokes.

SAILS.—In former days the Miskito are known to have employed sails (M.: *kwaliara;* T., P.: *asna nohni;* U.: *asna nohka*[25]) of native

[25] These names literally mean "large cloth."

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224 4 o'clock; that is when the animals and birds are feeding. During the remainder of the day the forest is quiet, and most of the birds roost in the dense treetops.

487 224 TRAVEL TO THE HUNTING GROUND.—Travel is effected chiefly by small pitpans, for the Indians are canoe men by necessity, the rivers being their roads. They leave their boat at a certain spot, the parting point of a trail leading to a good hunting ground, that is, a region abundant in fruit trees. To a stranger such hunting trails are barely perceptible; here and there marks on trees made with the machete and broken twigs indicate the direction. The Indians always travel in single file, even when there is a broad road, or when they traverse open country. In marching they always glance at the sun and they observe the direction the clouds are moving, that is from northeast to southwest on the Mosquito Coast. Intuitively they keep in their mind a mental picture of the direction they came from. They walk along, silent and watchful, and at times stand still to listen.

224 STALKING.—The Indian is an expert stalker, but not a true sportsman; he rarely shoots at the game while it is in motion, except in the midst of a flock of flying birds. He therefore rarely misses the mark, but is not necessarily a good marksman. Owing to his scarce clothing he moves about the forest without making any noise. His color also appears to a certain degree to assimilate with the forest.

IMITATING THE CALL OF THE GAME.—The Indian huntsman imitates the call of animals and birds, in order to call them within arrow or gun shot. Bone whistles (M.: *kyaki wasbaya;* S.: *malka kuñ*) are used to lure the agouti (*Dasyprocta* sp.) under certain trees at the time when the latter drop their fruits. This trick is especially successful during the pairing season of certain animals. The Indian is thoroughly acquainted with the habits of the game.

HUNTING DOGS.—A lot of skinny, mangy dogs, esteemed for their skill in stirring up the game, are found in the Indian villages. With the aid of large dogs trained for the purpose, the jaguar is cornered and the puma is driven up a tree, where it may easily be shot by the hunter. When the Indian ascends a stream he keeps close to the river bank and lets his dog range the woods. The latter, upon scaring up some game, will give tongue immediately and endeavor to drive it to the water. This is the common way of hunting the paca which lives at the river bank and plunges into the water when pursued. This rodent also enters hollow trees and burrows in the ground and is then difficult to secure. Its meat is delicious and is appreciated by the average foreigner.

224 824 Before leaving for the chase the dog's snout is rubbed with certain herbs, so that the game shall not be able to smell it. This procedure is also supposed to clear the scent of the dog and sharpen his perceptions. An infusion from a small parasitic plant, called in Spanish

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"lengua de venado" (deer's tongue), is administered by the Sumu to the hunting dogs when they wish to get a deer.

HUNTING WEAPONS.—Muzzle-loading shotguns (M.: *raks, rakbus;* S.: *arakbus, arakbus*) are now used on the chase by all the Miskito, but bow and arrow (see Hunting and Fighting Implements) are still employed by the Sumu for that purpose. The arrow is not discharged at an object more than 75 feet away, but it has the advantage of not scaring the other game in the neighborhood, as does the discharge of a gun. Upon meeting a drove of peccaries, the hunters surround it, and each one of them will attempt to shoot several arrows before the scared game have found an outlet to escape. Three or four arrows are generally taken along by each man, as the wild cane shaft generally breaks during the struggle of the wounded animal; the larger game may even break the hardwood foreshaft or the iron head of the arrow.

Snares, traps, and slings are seldom used to-day. The Kukra are said to have been expert in capturing big game by making a deep hole in the neighborhood of fruit trees. It was carefully camouflaged with the aid of branches and leaves, and a small trail was cut to lead the victims to it.

DEER.—Nocturnal animals, especially the two small species of deer found in the country (*Odocoileus* sp. and *Mazama* sp.), are hunted occasionally with the aid of torches. Toward the close of the dry season the savanna is also fired and drives are organized to hunt deer or other animals, which are driven in a corner, where they are easily secured. Deer, agouti, and birds are the chief game found in the savannas and along the coast.

PECCARY.—The white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu* sp.) is highly esteemed as meat; it travels in large droves, which may be heard from some distance. Occasionally it charges the hunter and forces him up a tree; some bushmen claim, however, that all one needs to do in such circumstance is to step behind a large tree, whereupon the animals keep on rushing forward without attempting to turn. The smaller collared peccary (*Pecari angulatus*) has a dorsal gland which Europeans regarded as the navel in former days; this gland has to be cut off immediately after death, otherwise the flesh can hardly be eaten. The weight of these beasts may range from 50 to 100 pounds. The peccaries, like most of the other edible animals, are supposed to have an owner, who keeps them shut up at times, and does not release them unless the sukya practices certain rites of incantation and makes a small offering.

OTHER MAMMALS.—Among the other game animals the most esteemed are two species of monkey, the spider monkey (*Ateles* sp.) and the capuchin monkey (*Cebus* sp.). The tapir (*Tapirella bairdii* syn. *Elasmognathus bairdii*) is considered a special delicacy in certain regions of the Mosquito Coast; in other districts its flesh is said to be

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Fish may also be preserved by drying it in the sun, after having cleaned it and rubbed salt into the scraped flanks.

VEGETABLE FOOD.—Vegetables, such as cassava, sweet potatoes, tania, yams, green bananas, and plantains, are either boiled in water or (occasionally in coconut milk) with meat or fish, or they are roasted in the hot ashes. Cassava prepared by the last-named process is called *bulbul* by the Miskito.

The fruit of the pejivalle palm is also boiled in water, after which the skin is easily removed. Inferior varieties of this fruit are generally mashed and consumed in the shape of a beverage, either soured or fermented.

A sort of bread (M.: *tani;* S.: *dipis*) is also made. Dry maize is ground on the metate with the addition of a little water. It is then wrapped in large bijagua leaves after the manner of the "tamales" of the Ladinos. A few days later when this mass has turned sour it is baked in the embers. The Sumu also bake it occasionally, immediately after grinding the maize, without allowing it to turn sour; it is then known to them by the name *pan* (from the Spanish "pan"). The Ulwa make this bread generally from unripe maize.

The pith or "cabbage" of various palms (*Attalea, Chamaedorea, Euterpe, Iriartea, Oreodoxa*) may be eaten either pickled or cooked; it is slightly bitter in taste. The pith and the small acid fruits of the pingwing or piñuela (*Bromelia pinguin* L.; M.: *ahsi;* S.: *ahsi, wakari*) are also esteemed. In times of scarcity the tender young bamboo shoots are also cooked and eaten.

The leaves of a small wild-growing plant, called cucumber or calaloo (*Phytolacca decandra* L.), are occasionally eaten as "spinach" by the Indians, who have taken this habit from the Creoles and Negroes. The common name "calaloo" for this plant savors of African origin; the Miskito call it *tilba pata* "tapir food." Indians and Ladinos use the leaves sometimes as soap, hence the local Spanish name "jaboncillo."

WILD FRUITS.—The Indians also collect the fruits of a number of wild-growing trees, of which the following are the most important for food: Hog plums (*Spondias lutea* L.; M.: *pahara;* S.: *walak*), nances or nancitos (*Byrsonima crassifolia* H. B. K.; M. and S.: *krabo, karabo*), zapotes or mammee apples (*Lucuma mammosa* Gaertn.; M.: *kuri;* S.: *sipul*), sapodillas or naseberries (*Sapota zapotilla* Coville; M.: *iban;* S.: *iban, sabakan*), guapinol or locust tree (*Hymenaea courbaril* L.; M.: *lāsa, laka;* S.: *tipi*), several species of dwarf guavas (*Psidium* sp.; M.: *kru;* S.: *kuru, arayañ*), breadnut tree (*Helicostylis ojoche* K. Sch.; M. and S.: *pisba, tisba*), monkey apple (*Moquilea platypus* Hemsl.; M.: *puramāra;* S.: *lasat*), beach or sea grape (*Coccoloba uvifera* L.; M. and S.: *waham*), icaco or coco plum (*Chrysobalanus icaco* L.; M. and S.: *tawa*) and several species of granadillas or fruits of passion

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to frighten that feline and drive it away, by shooting arrows at it, making great fires, and beating drums. The same belief is held by these Indians with regard to a solar eclipse (T., P.: *ma nawa kawe;* U.: *ma nawa kasya* "the jaguar is eating the sun").[78] 821

The Miskito, however, do not share in this superstition; they call the lunar eclipse *kuti di-akura alkan* "the moon has caught his mother-in-law," and the solar eclipse *yu di-akura alkan* "the sun has caught his mother-in-law."[79]

SNAKE CHARMING.—Snake charming is practiced on the Mosquito Coast by Negroes chiefly (native Africans especially), but some of the Miskito are also supposed to know this art. In order to remain invulnerable against the bite of any snake, these people are said to drink from time to time an infusion made by boiling the guaco weed (*Mikania* sp.) in water. The same effect may be obtained by applying a little juice from the latter plant into a small incision in the skin. The chewing of a few guaco leaves every day is also supposed to be an efficacious preventive against snake bites. The best snake charmers are said to eat the head of the reptile after having extracted the poisonous fangs; others merely cook their food with a little fat extracted over a slow fire from the head of a snake. The snake charmer must submit to restrictions in diet during certain periods of the year; he must also abstain from sexual intercourse with other women but his own, lest he might lose his powers. 789 [751]

In order to capture a poisonous snake without any danger to himself, the snake charmer chews a little bark from a certain shrub (M.: *pyuta sakka*) and then spits upon the head of the reptile. The latter is immediately stupefied and becomes absolutely harmless. [824]

Many people are supposed to keep tame snakes in their houses or fields in order to guard their property. These reptiles act as watchdogs and will bite any intruder. The more ignorant Ladinos, who call such a snake "sontín" (from the English word "something," it appears), believe that this habit is practiced by almost all the Indians and Negroes of the Mosquito Coast. 231

CAMOTILLO POISON.—This is supposed to be a deadly poison with the aid of which the intended victim will die at a specified date, if everything has been prepared the right way. Even if the victim should know that camotillo has been administered to him he can not escape from a lingering death, for science knows of no way to counteract its effects. 278

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[78] The Cuna Indians of Panama believe that eclipses of the sun or of the moon are caused by a demon—half dog, half woman—which starts eating those heavenly bodies; these Indians drive the demon away by shooting at it with miniature arrows (E. Nordenskiöld, Comparative Ethnographical Studies, vol. F, pt. 2, Göteborg, 1920, p. 20).

[79] Sun and moon are considered masculine in the Miskito language.

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liquid to the people present, but none of them dares to inspect it, not being immune from its effects as are the poison doctors and the foreigners. During the last two decades the fear of buried poison has spread to the Tawira-Miskito and to the Sumu; these Indians believe that the Miskito from Rio Coco are especially dangerous on account of their habit of killing their enemies with the aid of buried poison. Certain charms, as, for instance, the bitter antidote bean (*Fevillea cordifolia*), are occasionally carried to ward off the effects of such witch poison.

DREAMS.—The Indian pays great attention to dreams (M.: *yapri sdukkan;* T., P.: *amana;* U.: *amiñna*). When he dreams that he has killed plenty of game he is certain to have good luck in the chase on the following morning. If he dreams of an accident he refuses to leave the settlement during the next few days. When he dreams of strangers, he expects a visit in the near future. The sukya, while curing a sick person, invokes friendly spirits in order to obtain from them during the dream information regarding the nature of the illness.

HAUNTED TREES.—The silk-cotton tree (see Religion, etc.) and the various species of figs (*Ficus* sp.), especially the giant chilamate or higuero, are said to be haunted. The Indians and Creoles believe that these fig trees flower only during the night and hold the fig to be the true fruit. Any one daring to go under the tree about midnight will be able to see the blossom and after that will be favored with good luck in anything he may attempt. This belief is shared by the ignorant Ladinos, who claim that the fig trees flower only on Good Friday night and that a blanket spread under them at midnight will be covered with small blossoms on the following morning.

MAGIC AND SORCERY: SUKYA, OKULI, SPIRITIST, OBEAH OR VOODOOISM

SHAMANS IN GENERAL.—Among these credulous people a great influence is exercised by the shamans, of which there were formerly only two categories, the *sukya* and the *okuli*. Of the latter there should be only one at a time, but of the former there is one in almost every larger village. In recent years two other sorts of shamans, the *spiritist* and the *obeah man*, have appeared on the coast.

These shamans play a great rôle in the life of the Indians, for they act as medicine men, doctors (see Hygiene: Diseases and their cure), augurs, conjurers, magicians, wizards, diviners, rain makers, spell-binders, priests, preachers, teachers, guides, advisors, counsellors, depositaries of tribal traditions, and the like. Their opinions were formerly of the greatest weight in tribal assemblies. Still, there is nothing characteristic about them in the way of ornament or dress,

361 streams. The villages and their populations were studied from Bilwas Karma to San Carlos. (See map.) The villages themselves are perched up high on the banks so that floods will not carry them away.

362 Once a house site has been determined the Indians clear the bush and all large trees, that may endanger the house in case of storms, are felled. The house is usually of rectangular design. Four posts or more are used to hold up a sharp sloping thatched palm leaf roof *(bahna)*. In many houses these roofs extend to about five feet off the ground. The posts are usually of ironwood. Several varieties are used for thatching. [321] such as the *cohune (Attalea cohune)*, *skomphora*, *cola de gallo* or *suita (Calyptrogyne sarapiquensis)* and *caña danta (Geonoma* sp.). These palm leaves may last from for to five years as a roof. Although many Indians use nails today, lianas are still used to bind these structures together. The sides of the houses may be made of split bamboo or boards. Most houses have a sort of loft *(tint)* immediately beneath the roof. It is formed by laying split bamboo or boards across the beams and is reached with the use of a ladder. Various forms of bamboo wattlework may make up the interior walls. Most of the dwellings seen have the floor elevated from the ground at a distance of three to four feet. Thus the houses appear to be set on a series of stilts.

Formerly long communal houses or multiple family houses were used by tribes. Today this practice is abandoned and the family type house is what is found. It must be noted, however, that although many houses are raised from the ground, one occasionally encounters a more primitive dwelling where the family live directly on the ground clay with just a low overhanging roof for protection. But this process can only serve as a temporary shelter since the torrential rains would quickly wash away the household effects.

352 Iron stoves for cooking are common in most houses and in some cases [313] the stove is in a separate house (cookhouse). Many old crates, wooden 354 boxes, and bamboo devices are used for tables and chairs. Beds are made of split bamboo and are raised on posts two to three feet from the floor. Recently hammocks have become popular in the area. They may be purchased from the traders or hand made with cotton, tree bark or Bromelia fibers. Small hammocks are used for children.

[373] Pine wood torches are used for illumination at night and in some cases fiber clusters are impregnated with oils or waxes and lit up. Under the roof the fishing, hunting and agricultural implements are kept.